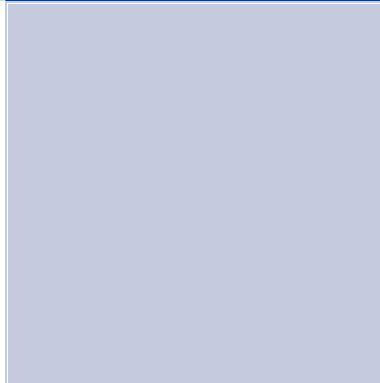
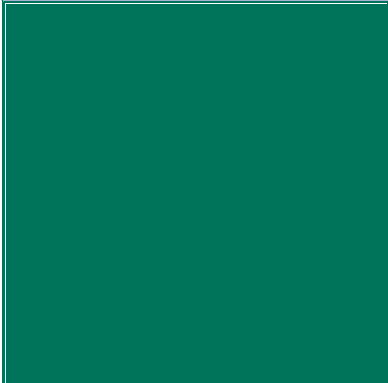



***Report On
The Biennium
2000 - 2002***



The *mission of the Employment Security Commission* is to promote and sustain the economic well being of North Carolinians in the world marketplace by providing *high quality and accessible workforce-related services*. The Commission provides employment services, unemployment insurance, and labor market information to the State's workers, employers, and the public. These services promote *economic stability and growth, development of a skilled workforce, and a world class economy* for North Carolina. The following goals will guide the work of the Employment Security Commission as it meets state and federal guidelines and its overall mission.

- Enhance the Employment Security Commission's central partnership role in the workforce development community by leading and/or supporting initiatives and outreach that *promote the effective delivery of services* for the citizens of North Carolina.
- Ensure that the Employment Security Commission is the  recognized source for job matching, unemployment insurance, and labor market information for North Carolina's *workers, employers, and public*.
- Preserve the integrity of the trust and reserve funds that assist qualified unemployed workers, and ensure a level of funding that will support high quality workforce services for the citizens of North Carolina.
- Maximize the *effective use of technology in the delivery of workforce services* to North Carolina's workers, employers, and the public through real time, Internet-based, job search registration, job recruitment, unemployment insurance benefit claims, and labor market information access.
- *Treat each individual, customer, and employer with dignity, courtesy, fairness, and respect.*

N.C. ESC — Report On The Biennium

I am proud to present to you the Biennial Report of the Employment Security Commission (ESC) for the period covering July 1, 2000 through June 30, 2002. As the report shows, the biennium was marked by great accomplishment, key technological advances, and great progress toward our goal of providing more efficient and higher quality services to the citizens of North Carolina. Unfortunately, during this two-year time period, the economic front was also confronted by instability.

In these times of economic crisis for many North Carolinians, the ESC continued to offer workers who lost their jobs through no fault of their own, a safety net by which they could receive unemployment insurance (UI) benefits. Staff in the ESC local offices across the state continued helping individuals seeking employment, but in the very real sense, the focus switched primarily to assisting non-traditional populations in filing for UI benefits. These benefits were not the financial equivalent to previous salaries, but they did assist in paying rent and buying groceries until the individuals could find employment. UI benefit payments also helped the local economies across the state to remain intact when major layoffs occurred.

With many more citizens filing for UI benefits than ever before and no staff increases to handle the increased volume of work, technological advances that made filing UI claims more efficient during the biennium saved the day. During the past two years, individuals with access to a computer from private homes to public libraries could file initial UI claims online through the ESC's web site, www.ncesc.com. For customers not com-

fortable using computers, the ESC developed a self-service package of all necessary forms that applicants can complete at home to save the time when they report to the ESC office. In addition to filing for UI benefits, all ESC

offices and the web site

have current job listings available for all applicants to peruse.

The best news is that North Carolina's economy is improving, although it is improving at a rate slower than anyone would like. Yet, this improvement is expected to be steady. During this time of recovery, the ESC will continue to provide North Carolinians with workforce services. North Carolina's citizens should take comfort in knowing that the ESC is ready, willing, and able to help those who become unemployed, in good times and in bad, aiming toward economic stability in the community.

Sincerely,

Harry E. Payne Jr.
Chairman



The Employment Security Commission of North Carolina ***Commissioners Serving, 2000 -2002***

Harry E. Payne Jr., Chairman

*Thomas S. Whitaker,
Acting Chairman*

*Raymond W. Goodman Jr.,
Former Chairman*

*Dr. J. Parker Chesson Jr.,
Former Chairman*

John Cilley

Jack Cipriani

John Horne

Thom Myers

Brenda N. Oocumma

Lisa Piercy

Linda Sutton

Administrative

The ESC benefited from the leadership of four chairmen during the time period July 1, 2000 through June 30, 2002. At the beginning of the biennium, the ESC was nearing the end of Dr. J. Parker Chesson Jr.'s four-year service. Dr. Chesson retired from the ESC on October 31, 2000. Raymond W. Goodman Jr. began serving the ESC as Chairman and remained in that position from November 1, 2000 until June 13, 2001. Thomas S. Whitaker was named Acting Chairman and served from June 14, 2001 through December 30, 2001. On December 31, 2001, Governor Easley named Harry E. Payne Jr. as Chairman of the ESC and he continues to the present. The following are senior staff serving under Mr. Payne's new structure:

- *Thomas S. Whitaker*, Deputy Chairman for Programs and Chief of Staff
- *Muriel K. Offerman*, Deputy Chairman for Administration
- *David L. Clegg*, Deputy Chairman for Communication

Communications

The creation of the Office of Communications combines the ESC Public Information Office (PIO), constituent services, publishing, Legal Services, and Labor Market Development areas of the ESC. During the biennium, the PIO spearheaded several initiatives to better communicate with the ESC customers, the media, legislators and the general public about agency issues and activities. The office took advantage of digital and Internet technology to distribute press releases, photos, newsletters and other publications in a more rapid and cost-efficient manner. E-mail communications and the Public and Media Information portal on the ESC's web site have been the primary vehicles for this effort.

Through the PIO, the division produced weekly newspaper columns, weekly radio spots, press releases, the quarterly business-oriented *Job Servant* newsletter, posters and fliers, and audio and video public service announcements. These, combined with other products, allow the ESC to more effectively communicate with its customers.

Internal communications were strengthened by the office through timely e-mails, coordinating events, providing video and graphic services to other ESC divisions, and the monthly *ESC News*. Members of the General Assembly were sent *The Hometown News* from Chairman Payne on a timely basis electronically to provide even more critical communications to those elected officials. A pocket card was developed by the office with key monthly and year-to-date statistics recounting unemployment insurance benefits paid by county as well as numerous other categories of interest. It was mailed (and also available via the ESC web site) by the 92 Local and Branch Office managers to city, county and state decision makers monthly.

The PIO has produced targeted communications on such topics as: state and local unemployment rates, extended unemployment benefits, status of the unemployment insurance trust fund, Internet filing of initial and continued claims, direct deposit of benefits, services to special populations, and other topics of vital interest to individuals and businesses in North Carolina.

Members of ESC's executive staff and several office managers took part in broadcasts on OPEN/net, a live, call-in program produced by the N.C. Agency for Public Telecommunications. Topics discussed on OPEN/net included individual and business services, along with unemployment benefit issues.

In an effort to better serve the ESC's large Hispanic/Latino customer base, PIO also took the lead in translating ESC brochures, forms, informational videos, and other products into Spanish. This effort included several OPEN/net programs conducted entirely in Spanish for this targeted audience. The focus placed on communications by Mr. Payne through this administrative change has improved the public image of the ESC in a time of difficult economics and high unemployment rates.

The ESC benefited from the leadership of four chairmen during the biennium:

Dr. J. Parker Chesson Jr. (Oct. 1, 1996 - Oct. 31, 2000), Raymond W. Goodman Jr. (Nov. 1, 2000 - June 21, 2001),

Acting Chairman Thomas S. Whitaker (June 14, 2001 - Dec. 30, 2001), and Harry E. Payne Jr. (Dec. 31, 2001 - present).



New Agency Initiatives

Initiatives new to the ESC since Chairman Payne's arrival include both a recognition of **Workers' Memorial Day** and a new Safety Program for the agency. The ESC held a ceremony April 29, 2002 recognizing the heroes of this state who lost their lives on the job. In a first of its kind celebration of these heroes for the agency, Chairman Payne spoke of the importance of these workers to their families, to their communities, and to the state of North Carolina. More than 200 people attended the ceremony, representing other state agencies, the private sector, and union officials.

During the memorial ceremony Chairman Payne announced the creation of the ESC's new **Safety Program**. Mary Carol Lewis joined the ESC staff as director of the newly created office of Safety and Health. The office was created as an outgrowth of Chairman Payne's strong commitment to workplace safety and health and a quality work environment. The office will build upon current safety and health program elements in place at ESC and guide the agency toward certification as a Carolina Star employer; a designation awarded by the N.C. Department of Labor that recognizes employers with exemplary safety and health programs.



A major strategic initiative for the agency is the movement toward systems-based management creating improved alignment and integration of management practices and business methods. The resulting **Office of Organizational Effectiveness**, directed

by Curtis Ricketts, provides direction and support for the agency's efforts in building an organization as a mission driven, customer-focused, continuously improving, and results oriented enterprise. One key component includes a focus on process management and work flow. The ESC initiative is based on two models: the ISO 9000 quality management system standard and the Malcolm Baldrige performance excellence criteria. The office provides project management, consultation, and monitoring services to the department's managers and staff on strategic planning, performance measurement, customer satisfaction, continuous improvement, quality assurance/control, as well as risk management and assessment. The Internal Audit section leads risk management and assessment efforts, and is responsible for conducting man-

agement and operational audits for the agency to improve overall effectiveness and the efficiency and security of agency operations.

On June 26, 2002, the ESC celebrated its **Employer Awards Program** with a reception honoring the 80–100 employer nominees from across North Carolina who had been recognized by their local ESC managers for their support of the Commission. Chairman Payne chose to have the ESC sponsor the awards program to stress the commitment that the agency feels for its employer customer base.



The ESC also sponsored an **Art Contest** for high school students throughout the state of North Carolina. Any student in grades 11 and 12 were invited to submit a drawing exemplifying his or her concept of "Work in North Carolina." The submissions were to be judged by art teachers at the community college level and winning entries were to be duplicated and displayed in ESC offices throughout the state. The project received commendation from State School Superintendent Mike Ward for focusing young peoples' minds on the world of employment.

Although an event reaching beyond the dates of the biennium, Chairman Payne's concept of the **Labor Day Central Office Telephone Access** is a prime example of his commitment to serving the total ESC customer base. The Chairman realized that many working people need access to services of the ESC and are unable to reach ESC employees during the normal business day working hours. Under his direction, the PIO provided sweeping publicity for all local offices ensuring that citizens across the state were aware that, on Labor Day, they could contact an individual at ESC to ask questions. With such an innovative idea, the Chairman had no difficulty finding volunteers to work on their scheduled holiday. Telephone lines from across the state were re-wired so that individuals had merely to dial their own Local Office phone number and calls were re-routed to one conference room in Raleigh. In that room, volunteers answered questions for nine hours on a traditional holiday when state government offices are closed to the public.

Administrative, cont.

Legislation

Another factor accomplished through the administrative arm of the ESC is the legislative agenda put forth in each session of the North Carolina General Assembly. The following bills were introduced during the past two legislative sessions:



House Bill 311 — Indian Tribe Unemployment Option

An act to authorize Indian tribes to elect to make unemployment payments, in lieu of contributions, to reimburse actual compensation paid with respect to employees, as required by federal law.

House Bill 334 — Exemption for Interns

An act amending the Employment Security laws to exempt from the definition of employer governmental employers who hire interns.

House Bill 342 — ESC Records/Evidence

An act relating to the admissibility, photographic reproduction, and retention of records of the Employment Security Commission.

House Bill 343 — Remove Employment Security Sunsets

An act removing sunset provisions relating to the Employment Security Law of North Carolina and making other amendments.

House Bill 344 — Domestic Employer Wage Reports

An act relating to the annual filing of wage reports by domestic service employers and to the late filing and payment penalties under the Employment Security Law of North Carolina.

House Bill 345 — Authorize Reed Act Funds

An act authorizing the Employment Security Commission to expend Reed Act Funds.

Senate Bill 398 — Shift Restrictions

An act to remove the sunset on undue family hardship.

Senate Bill 402 — Keep Alternate Base Period

An act repealing the sunset provision relating to the redefinition of the base period for unemployment benefits and the one and one-half time test. [Not ratified. Conference Committee appointed.]

Senate Bill 734 — Employment Security Funds

An act to appropriate funds to the Department of Community Colleges for regional and cooperative initiatives. [Not ratified. Referred to Committee on Appropriations/Base Budget.]

House Bill 747 — Make ESC Surtax Permanent

An act to remove the sunset on 1999 legislation that reduced the unemployment insurance tax by 20 percent for most employers and substituted an equivalent contribution to fund enhanced Employment Services and Worker Training programs.

Senate Bill 840 — ESC Attorneys' Fees

An act providing for the reimbursement of expenses including attorneys' fees in claims before the Employment Security Commission. [Not ratified. Re-referred to Committee on Appropriations/Base Budget.]

House Bill 1040 — Temporary Extended Unemployment Benefits

An act relating to the Temporary Extended Unemployment Benefits (TEUC) Second Tier benefit qualifications for North Carolina.

Technological Advances

During the time period July 1, 2000 through June 30, 2002, the Employment Security Commission of North Carolina (ESC) continued to strive to provide a high standard of customer service with an increasing customer base. Therefore, the ESC has emphasized the effective use of technology in the delivery of workforce services to North Carolina's workers, employers, and public through real time, Internet-based services. In an effort to become accessible to new customer bases and to be more conveniently available to traditional customers, the agency has focused primarily on automating many of the services that had previously required customers to visit offices in person or by telephone. The agency's goal is to offer key ESC services online, regardless of whether customers need to file for unemployment insurance benefits, obtain labor market information, or seek either employees or employment opportunities.

The ESC Internet portal is the center of this effort. The ESC's redesigned web site with the new portal concept and supporting applications was developed entirely in-house using existing Information Systems staff and project assistants. The traditional presentation oriented web site was updated to incorporate portals targeted for different customer groups: business services, individual services, labor market information, and public and media information. The portal concept allows customers to do business with the ESC quickly and easily, rather than drilling through services and information that do not apply to them. Each portal serves a distinct audience and includes only the services relevant to that audience.

The business and individual service portals have both secured and unsecured services for employers, employer representatives (service bureaus), claimants and applicants. Implementation of the portal has also facilitated migration toward use of a single identifier for tax and benefit functions.

Business Services

The business portal offers the following secured services to employers and their representatives:

Tax Account Maintenance:

- Apply for a UI tax account number with immediate liability determination
- Make real-time name and address and account status changes
- Receive online FUTA recertification
- View the account status
- View the most recent experience rating ledger (tax rate calculation)
- View the status of all outstanding accounts receivable and those receivables closed out in the past calendar year

- Pay outstanding accounts receivable by credit card
- View the status of all outstanding accounts payable and those payables closed out in the past calendar year
- Voluntary contribution calculator

Quarterly Wage Reporting and Tax Payment:

- File quarterly tax and wage reports
- Pay quarterly tax due by credit card
- Pay quarterly tax due by ACH (automated clearing house) debit
- View the current and five prior year tax rates
- View the status of all tax and wage reports for the past six years

Unemployment Insurance Claims Activities:

- File attached (temporary layoff) and to tally separated claims
- Respond to notices of claims filed and separation issues
- View estimated potential benefit charges
- View actual benefit charges

Employment Services:

- Post job openings and search for qualified applicants

In an effort to become accessible to new customers and to be more conveniently available to traditional customers, the ESC has focused on automating and offering online many of the services that had previously required customers to visit offices in person or by telephone, including filing for unemployment benefits and job search services.



Technological Advances, cont.

Individual Services

Some of the secured services offered to individuals are:

- File a claim for unemployment benefits
- Register for work
- Search for and apply for job openings posted with the ESC
- File a weekly certification for an ongoing unemployment insurance benefit claim
- View estimated benefits
- View 1099-G information for benefits paid in the prior calendar year

In addition to the Internet-based applications, the ESC also implemented a new generation of voice recognition units (VRUs) for the JOBS LINE which is used by claimants to file weekly continued claims certifications and listen to targeted job openings in their line of work. The previous generation of equipment was over 10 years old and lacked capacity for expanded workload volume and functions. The telephone network supporting the VRUs was also updated to handle peak-processing loads more efficiently.

Labor Market Information

The Labor Market Information portal directs customers to various services and resources including Labor Force Statistics, Occupational Information, and Industry Information. Additionally, the site includes access to special research projects, important economic indicators, information access and career resource tools, and various other statistical sources and external links.

Public and Media Information

This portal includes ESC news releases and printed publications, monthly activity reports, and information about the structure of the agency itself. Additionally, the portal contains links to Employment Security law, information about the ESC Commissioners and ESC regulations.

Automated Employer Status Determination

A mainframe-based system was developed to determine the liability status of a new employer based on the input of the Employer Status Report, Form NCUI 604, data. This system not only determines the liable status, it also assigns the employer account number and tax rates, creates the employer database record, including all appropriate segments, in real time, creates transactions to print quarterly reports that are

due and generates a letter notifying the employer of his/her liability status. The system was initially implemented on the mainframe and then linked to the revised web site application to allow employers to self-register from the web site. The system currently processes between 65 percent and 75 percent of the new employer applications without staff intervention.

Revised Audit Program

The computer software used by ESC auditors to audit employer payroll records to ensure compliance with ESC laws was rewritten during this period to improve efficiency and accuracy of the audit process. This program is currently being used statewide by our more than 90 auditors. The source code has been shared with the Georgia employment security agency.

Revised Wage and Claims Reporting Software Package

For many years, the ESC has provided free software to employers to assist them in meeting filing requirements for tax and wage reporting and temporary layoff reporting. This project encompassed the merging of the two software packages into a single comprehensive package. This source code has also been shared with the Georgia employment security agency.



Internal Operations

The ESC also spent this biennium focusing on the needs of its personnel and how technology could improve their daily jobs. In particular, technology was used to reduce redundant tasks and transition from an abundance of paper forms to electronic versions. Additionally, the following projects were completed:

- Supply catalog automated so authorized personnel can order directly without preparation of multiple manual forms.
- Centralized forms inventory developed using Intranet technology to eliminate costs associated with stocking and distributing forms.
- ESC moved from an internally maintained e-mail system to NC Mail in an effort to focus support efforts on network functions unique to the agency.
- Financial data warehouse was implemented to facilitate reporting to the multiple funding authorities to which the ESC is responsible.

Employment Services Division

In its ongoing efforts to provide the best services possible for the citizens of North Carolina, the ESC has become a national leader among other state employment security agencies for its success in meeting the needs of both its job seeker and employer customers. In order to meet the ever-increasing demand for our services, the ESC strives to achieve a balance between focusing on technological advances and providing the appropriate level of human interaction that is necessary to assist those who need more intensive services. The bulk of ESC service delivery comes through the agency's network of 92 local offices, including 60 full-service offices and 32 branch offices. Over the biennium, staff in local and branch offices averaged serving more than 806,000 individuals yearly, or roughly one out of every five members of the state's workforce.

Serving customers in the local office setting describes only a portion of the work done by the ESC. During the biennium, the ESC maintained an on-site presence at most of the state's community colleges, at four universities, six military bases, and one public housing facility. In addition to seeking out these specific places, customers can utilize ESC services and information anywhere that they have access to the Internet.

Over the two-year period, ESC continued to meet its performance goals for many service outcomes including job placement and entered employment. During each year of the biennium, the ESC placed an average of 104,775 individuals directly into jobs. An average of 208,750 individuals found work either directly through the ESC or after receiving an employment service from the agency. The agency's cost per individual entering employment over the biennium was \$103.45.

Between July 2000 and June 2002, North Carolina employers averaged listing 257,880 job openings annually. Employment Counselors, who assist job seekers in determining what types of employment best suit them, provided services to an average of 14,411 individuals each year. Additionally, ESC referred approximately 8,400 individuals each year to train-

ing programs where they could update and improve their skills or where they could gain experience and training for a new career.

Services to Applicants

The ESC provided services to roughly 9,800 **dislocated workers** yearly and participated in "Rapid Response" visits to assist workers in those workplaces affected by sudden layoffs or unex-

pected shifts in operations. During these visits, workers are provided on-site assistance with preparing résumés, beginning the process of filing for unemployment insurance benefits, and seeking information about job possibilities.

The ESC has long been recognized as a national leader in providing quality services to **veterans**. Over the 2000-2002 biennium, an average of 29,421 veterans became reemployed each year after receiving agency services, including 2,700 veterans with disabilities. During these two years, local office staff received five national awards that recognized exemplary service to veterans. In addition, during the second year of the biennium, the North Carolina Employment Security Commission was selected by the US Department of Labor to receive an Exemplary Service Provider Award which recognized the agency for the quality of its Employment and Training services for North Carolina's veterans.

The ESC continues to play an important role in North Carolina's welfare reform arena with the **Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)** and the **Welfare-to-Work (WtW) Tax Credit** programs. These tax credit programs offer a financial incentive for employers to hire individuals from one of several targeted groups that historically have had difficulty obtaining and retaining employment. The WOTC program offers employers a credit against their tax liability based upon a percentage of the salary earned by an individual who is a member of one of the targeted groups. This tax credit may be as much as \$2,400 for each individual hired.

Serving customers in the local office setting describes only a portion of the work done by the ESC. During the biennium, the ESC maintained an on-site presence at most of the state's community colleges, four universities, six military bases, and one public housing facility, in addition to the agency's Internet presence.



Employment Services, cont.

The WtW Tax Credit program is a two-year program that offers employers \$3,500 in tax credits the first year and \$5,000 the second year for each public assistance recipient hired and retained for two years. Through the WOTC program, ESC issued 15,599 tax credit certifications during the first year of the biennium and 11,816 tax credit certifications during the second year of the biennium. Through the WtW Tax Credit program, the agency issued 6,240 and 5,218 tax credit certifications during the first and second years of the biennium, respectively.

During the biennium, the North Carolina Division of Social Services contracted with the ESC to provide job placement services to food stamp recipients who needed assistance in finding employment and in obtaining training services. The **Food Stamp Employment Training Program** is an effective collaboration between the Division of Social Services and the ESC that has resulted in the provision of a variety of beneficial services for food stamp recipients in 81 counties throughout the state.

ESC is also responsible for processing applications to certify aliens for employment in North Carolina. The agency's primary role in this program is to ensure that the employment of foreign nationals in North Carolina does not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of U.S. workers in our state. During the biennium, ESC staff received and processed more than 7,600 applications for **Alien Labor Certification**.

In addition to maintaining and seeking ways to improve the established programs that comprised the ESC's purpose, several new responsibilities and challenges were relegated to the agency during the 2000-2002 biennium. With its usual focus on customer service and dedication to excellence, the ESC has accepted these new responsibilities and has achieved a measure of success in each one.

Workforce Development Initiative

During the biennium, the ESC maintained a major role in the provision of **Workforce Investment Act (WIA)** services in collaboration with other Workforce Development partners. Also during the period, the agency continued to be a major partner in strengthening and expanding North Carolina's **JobLink Career Center System**.

Currently, 57 local ESC offices have been chartered to function as hosts of JobLink Career Centers. In addition, local ESC staff are providing employment and other services at all of the JobLink Centers operated by other service providers, such as the Community College System, the Department of Commerce, and the Division of Social Services.

During the biennium, as part of our ongoing efforts to collaborate with other workforce partners in building and improving North Carolina's JobLink system, we gave partner agencies access to our automated service delivery system which includes all of our employer job listings. We took this action in order to reduce duplication and improve services to North Carolina job seekers and employers through a more coordinated statewide service delivery system.

The long-term partnership between the ESC and the state Department of Commerce facilitates the provision of WIA services. Through contractual arrangements in 12 of the 24 workforce investment areas, ESC staff provide case management and training services for adults and dislocated workers in accordance with provisions in Title I of the Workforce Investment Act. During the biennium, the Title I funding provided to ESC through these contractual agreements enabled us to provide training services for thousands of dislocated workers, economically disadvantaged adults and youth. In addition, the ESC was provided funding by the US Department of Labor to operate two National Emergency Grants for dislocated workers. These grants, which provided approximately \$10 million in additional federal funding for North Carolina, enabled the ESC and its partners to provide retraining services for more than 4,000 dislocated workers who were employed in traditional industries, such as textiles and furniture.

TAA & NAFTA Programs

The **Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)** program provides services for workers who have become unemployed or underemployed due to increased foreign imports. The **North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)** program provides services for workers who have become unemployed or underemployed due to increased imports or shifts in production to Canada or Mexico. The ESC is responsible for operating these programs for the federal government.



The objective of these programs is to help workers obtain gainful employment. Workers who qualify can receive funds for a maximum of two years of approved training curricula, funds to support themselves while attending training, and funds to subsidize their job search and possible relocation. In order to reduce training costs, approximately 98 percent of the training is conducted through the Community College System. Curricula to obtain nursing certifications and criminal justice degrees are among the most popular training courses. During the biennium, 10,804 workers were enrolled in training, and payments for tuition, books, and fees amounted to more than \$11 million. In addition, more than \$89,000 was paid directly to workers for their relocation and job search expenses.

In addition to the TAA program, the **Trade Readjustment Act (TRA)** program provides special unemployment insurance funds for program participants. On average for the biennium, the ESC paid \$14,329,780 yearly in TRA funds. The ESC also provided special UI assistance under the NAFTA program. Under NAFTA, the agency provided an average of \$6,222,940 in benefits for each year of the biennium.

O*NET

The National Center for O*NET Development, located at North Carolina's ESC, is responsible for the development, maintenance, and update of the occupational information database. In addition, the Center is responsible for designing self-directed career exploration/assessment tools, which aid customers in making appropriate occupational choices. During the biennium, Center staff achieved several milestones. In support of the O*NET initiative, staff has developed and implemented O*NET OnLine, an application that allows users to access information in the O*NET database via the Internet. Two career exploration tools, the *O*NET Work Importance Locator™* and the *O*NET Interest Profiler™* were developed and made available in printed and electronic versions. These tools help customers identify their work-related interests and determine what they consider important on the job so that they may explore those occupations that relate most closely to the identified attributes. These tools help customers transition from assessing their interests and work values to matching their job skills with the requirements of occupations in their local labor markets.



Reemployment Services Program

The ESC's Reemployment Services Program is designed to expedite an early return to work for individuals who are receiving unemployment benefits. This program focuses on providing intensive services to participants immediately after they apply for benefits. Participants develop valuable job search skills that result in a shorter and smoother transition from unemployment to reemployment, allowing claimants to return quickly to wage earner status with limited financial impact. Reducing the total number of weeks that claimants receive unemployment benefits results in savings to the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund and may result in tax savings to employers. Employers also benefit because the program facilitates the process of meeting their staffing needs by identifying suitable potential workers.

Participants in the reemployment program are required to attend job seeking skills workshops that teach them new and more efficient job search skills. These workshops vary throughout the state and are tailored to local labor market conditions and to the needs of the individual job seeker. Participants learn how to develop a job search plan targeted toward their job interest(s) and participate in intensive job search activities and follow-up procedures. Program participants have frequent contact with ESC staff who develop job search plans for them and refer them to suitable employers as an aid to becoming reemployed.

During the biennium, 178,645 program participants were provided an employment service. Almost 160,000 participated in job seeking skills workshops, and 59,193 of these unemployed individuals entered employment as a result of job referrals and other services they received. The savings to the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund that resulted from the reemployment of these individuals amounted to more than \$85 million.

Unemployment Insurance Division

A key goal of the ESC's Unemployment Insurance (UI) program is to help maintain economic stability within North Carolina's communities. UI benefits are paid to workers who lose their jobs through no fault of their own to assist them in paying for job seeking and other basic expenses they incur until they secure new employment. In addition, the ESC's UI division assesses and collects employer taxes, which are used to pay benefits to eligible unemployed workers across the state. During times of economic slowdown, such as North Carolina has experienced during the past biennium, these UI funds also provide a source of cash flow to help stimulate economic activity in the community.

Increase in UI Rates and Applications for UI Benefits

During the recent economic downturn, the customer demand for unemployment benefits has significantly increased workloads in the ESC offices. To meet this increased demand for services, local office management and staff had to focus on providing unemployment benefit services. This shift in emphasis has ensured that agency staff provides the best in both UI and reemployment services to all claimants.

During each year of the biennium, ESC staff processed more than one million initial applications for unemployment benefits. During each of these years, the number of applications for benefits was approximately 50 percent higher than the number processed during the 12-month period immediately prior to the beginning of the biennium.

The level of applications for unemployment benefits in some counties increased more significantly than the statewide level. For example, in Catawba County the average number of initial applications for unemployment benefits was almost 270 percent higher than the number for the 12-month period that immediately preceded the biennium. In Davidson County, this percentage of increase was more than 295 percent and in Gaston County, it was more than 212 percent.

Filing Initial UI Claims

In September 2000, UI staff made the **on-line filing of initial UI claims** available to customers — another example of their continual efforts to provide technological advances to assist ESC claimants. If the claimant's data does not indicate federal or military wages, wages in another state, and if the last employer has properly reported taxable wages, filing an initial claim online does not require a visit to the ESC office until four weeks into the claim for work search approval.



A key goal of the ESC's Unemployment Insurance program is to help maintain economic stability within North Carolina's communities. During times of economic slowdown, such as North Carolina has experienced during the past biennium, these UI funds also provide a source of cash flow to help stimulate economic activity in the community.

Redesigned Web Site

Throughout the biennium, UI rates continued to soar. In an attempt to assist the unprecedented number of claimants receive their UI benefits in the most efficient manner possible, the ESC unveiled its redesigned web site — **ncesc.com** — in December 2001. The web site redesign was also in response to growing needs from all of the ESC's customers, particularly unemployed workers, but also employers and other job seekers. Rising unemployment in the state placed unprecedented demands on the ESC's staff and local offices. To continue a high standard of customer service with an increasing customer base, a variety of on-line systems were implemented and can be accessed through the site. The number of mouse clicks needed to achieve the customers' destinations has been greatly reduced, regardless of whether claimants want to file for unemployment insurance benefits, obtain labor market information, or seek employment opportunities.

Additionally, the web site is now compliant with the Americans With Disabilities Act.

On the web site, through the Individual Services portal, claimants can estimate their potential unemployment benefits, file their claim for unemployment insurance, register for work with the ESC, and file continued weekly claims online. They may also access job listings, career planning information, UI benefits training information, and may post résumés and ap-

plications for employers' review. UI claimants have been able to estimate their UI benefits online since July 1999 and file initial UI claims online since September 2000. However, the redesigned portal concept made these processes easier and North Carolina claimants began to use the options available to them with greater frequency. Staff intervention is now needed in only approximately one-third of the initial claims filed online.

Filing Continued Claims

During the biennium, the ESC's customers were given the abilities to file weekly continued claims online and to choose the direct deposit of their benefit payments. Intrastate and Interstate claimants were given the option to **file continued claims online** beginning December 2001. Continued claims are the weekly certifications that claimants must make to the ESC that they have been able and available to work and have been actively seeking employment in order to remain eligible to continue receiving UI benefits. Prior to this automation, claimants were required to telephone the ESC's toll free JOBS Line and respond to messages from a voice response unit (VRU) by pressing the appropriate numbers. With online filing, claimants are presented with the weekly certification questions and select yes or no from drop down boxes. At the conclusion of the online filing, any pertinent messages for the claimant will be presented. Claimants will be notified to contact their local office for additional explanation, assistance, or for fact finding, as they were previously when filing using the VRU system.

The Internet system of receiving weekly continued claims can handle more customers at once than even the telephone system, thereby eliminating even the briefest delay sometimes encountered in accessing the VRUs. The state's load of telephone claimants was divided so that one-half called each Sunday and the other half called on Monday. Any claimant missing their assigned calling day could call Tuesday through Saturday to report their current week's status. After each call was received with the questions answered appropriately, the claimant's benefit check would be mailed within approximately 24 hours. Checks are mailed within 24 hours of claims filed online also, but claimants are not restricted to the times or days that they can file claims. Filing continued claims online is

also often more convenient to the claimant than telephoning the VRU JOBS Line. Most claimants wish to file their continued claim as soon as legally possible; many prefer not to wait for their assigned day, especially those who were assigned Monday rather than Sunday. Continued claims can be filed on the web site as soon as the week being filed is completed. Claimants who do not have access to a PC are allowed to use computers available in ESC local offices, and many public libraries and Community Colleges allow citizens to use PCs for such purposes.

Claimants telephoning the VRU JOBS Line to file continued claims cost the ESC five cents for every minute that they are connected to the toll-free number. With most calls averaging 3.5 minutes, 17.5 cents are saved with every continued claim filed online: $[3.5 \text{ minutes} \times \$0.05 = \$0.175]$. In June 2002, 47,674 continued claims were filed online, for a savings to the ESC of \$8,342.95: $[47,674 \times \$0.175 = \$8,342.95]$.

Direct Deposit of UI Benefit Payments

In January 2002, the ESC instituted another option in the range of automated UI services. **Direct deposit of UI benefit payments** became available for claimants, as opposed to receiving benefit payments through the U.S. Postal Service. When claimants choose this option over normal mail delivery, the benefits are quickly posted to recipients' bank accounts, often within 24 to 48 hours of filing their continued claim. To participate in direct deposit, claimants must bring a voided check to their nearest ESC office for bank routing. Customers who use both the options of filing continued claims online and direct deposit, and who have no extenuating issues on their claim, can file a claim one day and have their UI benefit payment in their bank account in as little as 24 hours. Previously, they would have needed to telephone on an assigned day, wait to receive a check through the mail, and make a trip to their bank to accomplish that feat.

Direct Deposit is another cost-saving and convenience-added factor in the ESC's range of services. Not only do claimants have access to their funds sooner through an electronic benefit transfer, but they are also saved the inconvenience of a trip to the bank to deposit the check they would have received through the postal system.



Unemployment Insurance Division, cont.

The best determination of whether a service benefits customers is whether or not customers use that service. Estimates are that each direct deposit of UI benefits saves 40 cents in checks, envelopes, and postage. Therefore, the total 177,554 direct deposits made from December 2001 through June 2002 have saved ESC \$71,021.60 [177,554 x \$.40 = \$71,021.60]. The estimate of 40 cents only includes savings in checks, envelopes, and postage costs; it does not include staff time to print checks, stuff envelopes, and transport them to the post office daily. This estimate was made prior to the recent postal increase in July 2002.

The following shows the increased use of the continued claims and direct deposit services from implementation through the end of June 2002:

Month	Direct Deposit Payments	Online Weekly Continued Claims Filed
January 2002	1,561	13,674
February 2002	6,228	9,937
March 2002	22,496	25,957
April 2002	38,439	36,431
May 2002	46,726	54,617
June 2002	61,563	47,674

Online Employer Services

Through the web site's **Business Services** portal, employers now have additional electronic services and inquiry access for several functions. These include electronic notification and response capabilities to the *Notice of Claim and Request for Separation Information* that employers receive when individuals file UI claims and list them as the last employer. The web site also gives employers status information concerning their UI tax accounts and potential charges. These new and revised services have been actively promoted through seminars and presentations to employers and employer agent groups throughout the state during the biennium.

Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation (TEUC) Act Of 2002

Following North Carolina's unveiling of its Internet-based UI automation, Congress authorized the **Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation (TEUC) Act of 2002**. TEUC was signed into law March 9, 2002, and extended UI benefits for up to thirteen additional weeks. The extension was available to any claimant who had filed his claim on or after March 11, 2001, had subsequently exhausted that claim, and was still unemployed through no fault of his own. By Monday, March 11, 2002, a downloadable initial TEUC claim form was added to the web site for claimants to complete and mail, fax, or attach to an e-mail to send to a new extended benefits ID set up for this purpose. By expediting the initial filing process, the ESC was able to pay weekly claims for extended benefits the following week. Because this was such a new program, a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) was also added to the site very early in the life of TEUC for customer convenience. Without the portal in place, TEUC benefits could not have been paid with this expediency, efficiency, and accuracy.



As of June 30, 2002, the end of the biennial period, the ESC had paid 89,030 new TEUC claims for benefits and 466,144 individual weeks of benefits had been claimed. A total of \$119,727,964 in TEUC benefits were paid to North Carolina UI claimants from the beginning of the extension to the end of June 2002.

North Carolina law was modified to include **second tier Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation, (TEUC-X)**, an optional extended benefit program that operated on a triggering system. This plan triggers on when the average total unemployment rate is 6.5 percent or higher for a 13-week period. Based on this change, North Carolina "triggered on" for federal Extended Benefits (EB) with the week ending May 18, 2002. State law provides that an extended benefit period begins with the third week after the "trigger on" week; therefore, the extended benefit period effective in North Carolina began June 2, 2002. The second tier of (TEUC-X) benefits was payable in states only during a federal EB period. TEUC-X benefits were first payable in the

state with the week ending June 15, 2002. The same terms and conditions applicable to the payment of the initial TEUC entitlement applied to TEUC-X. Claimants were eligible for TEUC-X after they exhausted TEUC and were still within their UI benefit year.

Extended Benefits (EB) triggered on and was payable in North Carolina beginning with the week ending June 8, 2002. These benefits were paid with 50 percent federal funds and 50 percent state funds. Claimants who exhausted TEUC and TEUC-X were potentially eligible for the EB extension provided they were still within their UI benefit year.

At any time that North Carolina triggered off the EB factor of an average total UI rate of 6.5 percent or higher for any thirteen-week period, the EB extension would cease to be paid in the state. The EB program triggered off November 16, 2002. The TEUC-X program was allowed to continue in operation to assist N.C. citizens in a time of high unemployment.

Benefits of UI Technology

North Carolina's UI division has long been recognized among the nation's Employment Security agencies as a leader in automating UI services. For many years, other states have viewed North Carolina as a best-practice source and have borrowed ideas and programs for their use. Most of the products, however, have automated functions performed by the ESC staff and customers were only affected by the results of the automation, without seeing the automation firsthand. They benefited by receiving better services in a shorter period of time, but may not have actually used the automation themselves.



Although the ESC serves each of NC's 100 counties, offices cannot be located in each city, and some customers have to drive 30 or more miles for services. By enabling customers to file claims and register for work from a remote location, trips to the ESC office can focus on the claimant's reintegration into the labor market.

The ESC's UI division deems considerate customer service an ultimate goal. As its redesigned web site was ESC's first endeavor with the portal concept, generic NC Mail e-mail boxes have been placed on most every site to solicit customer feedback and suggestions as another benefit for claimants. Daily e-mails arrive, sometimes dozens each day, but each is answered within 48 hours.

In the midst of the biennium, July 2001, the statewide unemployment rate was 5.9 percent, up from 3.7 percent, just one year previous. During that month, the ESC processed a weekly average of 105,493 weeks claimed, up 31.3 percent from the previous month and up 86.3 percent from July 2000. Initial claims were filed at a weekly average of 28,321 in July 2001. Compared to July 2000, the average initial claims volume increased 70.8 percent. The ESC was faced with a need to redesign its web site for ease of access at the same time that the unemployment rates in the state began to spiral upward. These two non-related events led the agency to develop the portal concept to serve the ever-increasing number of customers with the quality of service the ESC is dedicated to providing.

Labor Market Information Division

The primary mission of the ESC's Labor Market Information Division (LMI) is the development, refinement and management of a comprehensive state and local labor market information system. The primary goal is to enhance and provide economic data on the state of North Carolina and all local areas.

Other goals include:

- providing comprehensive information and training to local customers of the LMI systems regarding products, information and services;
- maximizing the effective use of technology in the delivery of workforce services to North Carolina's workers, employers and the public through Internet-based labor market information;
- enhancing the LMI division's role in the workforce development community by leading and supporting initiatives and outreach that promote the effective and efficient delivery of services for the citizens of North Carolina;
- developing processes and procedures to collect and compile information to meet the needs of local LMI customers; and,
- performing these tasks in a manner that assures dignity, courtesy, fairness and respect for all.

Estimates were prepared and distributed throughout the biennium for key economic indicators including the size of the labor force, employment, unemployment and unemployment rates for the state, Metropolitan Statistical Areas, counties and other selected areas. LMI staff continued to be involved in national efforts to expand estimates to more local areas. Layoff and plant closing data by geography, industry, number of workers displaced and reasons for displacement were made readily available on the Internet at ESC's web site, **ncesc.com**.

During the period, LMI staff also provided monthly employment data on approximately 225,000 employers and

3,809,000 employees in North Carolina, their total quarterly wages, and the taxable wages for Unemployment Insurance (UI), as well as employer contributions. In addition, monthly estimates of employment, hours and hourly earnings in industry, including data on the numbers and characteristics of registered applicants and UI claimants, were published via the Internet.



All data were compiled in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

New Industry Coding Structure

During the biennium, staff of the LMI Division, in cooperation with BLS, were involved in the industry conversion from the Standard Industry Classification (SIC) system to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). This conversion represented one of the most profound changes for government statistical programs since the 1930s. Industrial classification systems provide the structure for the collection and aggregation of economic data, as well as for analysis, presentation and dissemination of such data. NAICS is the first industry classification system used in the United States to employ a unified economic concept to define industry.

Under the new system, industries are classified on the basis of their production or supply function. This approach creates more homogenous categories that are better suited

for economic analysis. During the period, approximately 225,000 North Carolina firms had NAICS codes assigned. The 2001 annual release of Employment and Wage Data in the fall of 2002 was the first release of information using NAICS.

The new application allows users to select specific elements to actually query the database for the desired data. Some of the features of this new application include: selecting data by Workforce Development Board Area or Economic Devel-

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opment Region; providing a link to national data; and, permitting the ability to select by any employment range and any or all of the NAICS codes. The application also has the capability to download the requested data. Initially, only the 2001 data will be available using this application. In the future, users will be able to select from a historical file going back to 1990. This dynamic web site will allow LMI customers to easily access and manipulate industry data to meet their needs.

Occupational Employment Statistics



Occupational employment and wage information is critical for informed decision making in both career exploration and job choice. During the biennium, the LMI Division provided occupational employment and wage estimates for wage and salary workers at statewide,

Metropolitan Statistical Area, balance of state, and county levels. Hourly occupational wage data were reported for Entry, Mean, and Experienced levels. Data were provided for more than 750 occupations.

In an effort to provide more timely data, the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey shifted from being annual to biannual in November 2001, thus permitting the occupational employment and wage data to be published twice a year. All states will switch to biannual collection starting with the fall 2002 survey.

During this biennium period, LMI staff also updated the occupational licensure information, detailing all occupations in North Carolina that require a license. Also listed are the educational requirements, the testing required, the fee and the address of the licensing agent.

Industrial and Occupational Projections

The LMI Division regularly prepares projections of future growth in employment by industry and occupations for many geographical areas, using industry and occupational data from the BLS federal/state cooperative programs, the Census and the Office of State Budget and Management. These projections are widely used for studying long-range economic and employment trends, planning education and training programs and developing career information.

During the time period, the projections unit completed and published industry and occupational employment forecast data for the state and more than 60 sub-state areas, based on 1998 data with projections to 2008.

In addition, the projections unit conducted two special research projects: **Mass Layoffs and the Economy of North Carolina**, an attempt to analyze the layoff/plant closings in North Carolina, the probable causes and the likely effect these events had on local communities and industries across the state; and **North Carolina's Changing Employment Pattern During 1975-2000 and Outlook Through 2008**, an analysis of the changes which occurred in North Carolina's industry and occupational makeup over the 25-year period, with a look at the possible future makeup of the state's workforce. These studies were reported in the *INSIGHT*, North Carolina's Labor and Economic Outlook newsletter.

Workforce Development

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in 1998 defined the crucial role of labor market information to be the planning, operation and evaluation of employment, training and related activities. In response to the full implementation of the Act in July 2000, the LMI Division expanded its outreach and training efforts. A team was formed to act as liaison with local Workforce Investment Boards, JobLinks and ESC local offices to inform and educate them with regard to the availability and use of labor market information for planning purposes, training initiatives and job search activities.

During the biennium, the Outreach and Training Unit grew to include four staff who interacted regularly with the local Workforce Development Boards, JobLink Career Centers, ESC local offices, economic developers, community colleges and partner agencies. During this period, Outreach staff attended local, state and national meetings where they made presentations, conducted training sessions and demonstrated labor market information dissemination tools to a variety of audiences. Building these strong local connections has resulted in an effective exchange of information and ideas which allows LMI staff to develop products and provide customized training in response to specific customer needs.

Labor Market Information, cont.

Labor Market Analyses

During the period, LMI staff provided labor market analyses through a variety of media to state and local customers. Information including job openings, available applicants, area workforce demographics and commuting patterns continued to be made available through printed and electronic media.

Reports on the availability and qualifications of the local workforce were prepared on defined areas, as requested by various interested entities. In-depth reports related to the local area workforce, including the availability of skilled workers in a 25-mile radius, were prepared upon request. In addition, ad hoc reports were prepared as appropriate or as requested.



Research on timely topics about North Carolina's economy were reported through a new quarterly newsletter, *INSIGHT*, North Carolina's Labor and Economic Outlook. Topics covered throughout the biennium included: *The Socioeconomic Impact of Hurricane Floyd*; *An Analysis of State Labor Market Indicators*; *Mass Layoffs in the North Carolina Economy*; *Company Policies and Fringe*

Benefits in North Carolina; *Economic Slowdown Impacts North Carolina*; *UI Benefit Payouts by County and Their Importance as an Economic Stabilizer*; and, *Where are the Jobs?*

LMI staff gave presentations on the North Carolina economy and other topics at various local, state and national workshops, seminars and conferences. The presentations were targeted to the needs of workforce professionals, educators, trainers, economic developers and researchers.

The Common Follow-up System

Legislative funding for the North Carolina Common Follow-up System (CFS) was continued during the biennium. The CFS is a longitudinal database that provides information on the education and employment outcomes of individuals who participate in publicly supported education, employment and training programs operated through 10 state agencies. During the 2001 Legislative Session, the North Carolina General Assembly transferred responsibility for the evaluation of

data contained in the CFS from the Office of State Budget, Planning and Management to the ESC. To this end, the ESC began analyzing data in support of its new evaluative responsibility. The agency will be issuing a series of reports on its evaluative efforts over the coming year.

The first of ESC's CFS evaluative reports focuses on the interrelationships among agencies in the overall provision of services. Data were analyzed across a four-year time period (July 1, 1997 through June 30, 2001). Results indicated that more than 3.5 million individuals received education, employment and training services through at least one of the 10 participating agencies over the four-year period. Of the more than 3.5 million individuals who received services, 68.4 percent received services from only one agency, while 23.1 percent received services from two agencies, and only 8.5 percent received services from three or more agencies. The ESC and the North Carolina Community College System provided services to the largest number of individuals — 1.7 million and 1.6 million, respectively. In addition, more than half a million individuals received services through both ESC and the Community College System.

North Carolina State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NC SOICC)

In 2000, after a year and a half in development, N.C. Careers (previously offered only as a subscription CD-ROM career development resource) became available

online. Unlike most state career information systems, **nccareers.org** does not require a paid subscription, thereby increasing North Carolinians' access to quality, fully integrated career information. The structure of this system simultaneously models a process of career decision making and provides annually updated career and educational information. To facilitate utilization of this resource, N.C. SOICC provides N.C. Careers training to career development professionals whose clients range from middle school students to adults.



North Carolinians were presented their 17th and 18th editions of the *Career Choices in North Carolina* tabloid and *User's Guide* during this time frame. While the events of September 11,

2001 eliminated the usual National Guard dissemination of these resources, state agencies pulled together to develop alternate plans for distributing them. Over the course of the biennium, the N.C. SOICC web site for career development professionals at www.soicc.state.nc.us/soicc/ increased the availability of a number of state publications, including both the agency and school versions of the *Career Choices User's Guide*. The N.C. SOICC also recently acquired a new web address: www.ncsoicc.org.

During the biennium, the interagency members of the N.C. SOICC continued to explore ways in which to share resources and services to promote career development in the state. The economic recession of this period reinforced agencies' recognition of the need to work together to build a strong workforce in North Carolina. The long-standing agency connections forged within the N.C. SOICC provided a solid foundation for collaboration on a variety of workforce projects.

Delivery Systems Development

The LMI Division concentrated efforts on the delivery of workforce information on the Internet through the ESC's web site, WebSARAS, N.C. Navigator and ESC's Intranet. Data content was updated and enhanced to provide the most accurate and up-to-date information for local customers. Several data sets were added to the LMI portal including Industry and Occupational Projections; Announced Layoffs and Plant Closings; ESC Activity Reports (North Carolina economic data including UI and ES activities for the month); *INSIGHT*, North Carolina's Labor and Economic Outlook newsletter; UI Trust Fund Analysis; and others. Interfaces for the applications were enhanced to improve functionality and ease of use. The ESC's homepage was revised to provide enhanced availability of local economic and demographic data through the LMI portal.



While strong emphasis was placed on Internet delivery, LMI staff continued to utilize a variety of data sources, analytical tools and distribution media to enhance the availability of quality labor market information to all customers. During the biennium, information was made available in printed format and electronically via the Internet and the State Wide Area Network. Administrative records and ongoing research results were used to supplement existing data sets and create new data sets. Internet-based applications were updated to provide links to related economic and workforce sites. With the hope of adding an additional research tool, the LMI division participated in a national "geocoding" project. Geographic Information System (GIS) technology provides an effort to improve spatial analysis of key economic and workforce data.

In addition, LMI staff participated and currently remain involved in a number of national projects designed to improve and expand collection and analysis of economic and labor market data.

Achievements and Awards, 2000 - 2002

The ESC's achievements over the 2000-2002 biennium were significant. The agency and individual staff members were recipients of state, regional, and national awards that recognized excellence, dedication, and commitment to innovation and public service.

2000 Awards

Exemplary Service Provider Award

North Carolina ESC * U.S. Department of Labor

International Award of Merit

North Carolina IAPES Chapter * IAPES

Secretary's Exceptional Achievement Award

Dianne Creech, Workforce Development * US DOL

Customer Service Award, Tools and Technology

North Carolina ESC * US DOL

National Employment Service Office Award

Fayetteville ESC * American Legion

National Local Office of the Year

Goldsboro ESC * Veterans of Foreign Wars

James C. Gates Distinguished Service Award

Frank Foronda, Whiteville ESC * Veterans of Foreign Wars

ES Office of the Year

Fayetteville ESC * American Legion

Disabled Veteran Outreach Specialist of the Year

Debra Best, Goldsboro ESC * Disabled American Veterans

DAV Distinguished Service Award

Ron Piercy, Asheville ESC * Disabled American Veterans

Outstanding Disabled Veterans Outreach Specialist

Jon Cone, Fayetteville ESC * American Legion

National Employment Service Award

Jacksonville ESC * Veterans of Foreign Wars

Outstanding Disabled Veterans Outreach Specialist

Edmond Hughes, New Bern ESC * Disabled American Veterans

2001 Awards

Exemplary Service Provider Award

North Carolina ESC * US DOL

National Employment Service Office Award

Fayetteville ESC * American Legion

National Outstanding Government Employer

Fayetteville ESC * American Veterans Organization

Outstanding Disabled Veterans Outreach Specialist

Andrea Glass, Burlington ESC * Disabled American Veterans

Recognition Award

ESC WOTC/WtW Program * US DOL

Ambassador of the Year

Bridget Stubblefield, Morehead City ESC * Carteret Co. Chamber of Commerce

2002 Awards

International Administrator of the Year

Thomas S. Whitaker * International IAPES

Eminent Achievement Award for State Employees

Bob Cottrell, Information Systems * Bureau of Labor Statistics

International Development By An Individual

Thelma Hill * International IAPES

Services to Veterans Group

Fayetteville ESC * International IAPES



**Employment Security Commission
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